

CB 10/03
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Communications Trade Newsletter



The Clip

Board

OP CRUCIBLE 2010

To our Oppos back home,

They said this would be a trip of a life time. How right were they!! It was hard saying goodbye to our loved ones again. Just had to keep in mind that it was only four months stint and we had plenty of amazing ports ahead of us.

The deployment is OP CRUCIBLE 2010 with our task group consisting of HMNZ Ships Te Kaha and Endeavour. The mission is Kiwi Ink and the ports include Cairns – Australia, Sembawang and Changi – Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai – China, Esquimalt and Vancouver – Canada, Seattle, San Francisco, San Diego and Hawaii – USA, and Papeete – Tahiti. We've participated in a few exercises, managed to cram in a lot of internal training, and the VLT's have done a great job with putting together tours and expeds for Ships Company while alongside.



Our journey began after Easter Weekend, in company with HMAS Anzac and HMNZS Endeavour. Our first two stops were Cairns and Singapore along the way making preps for Bersama Shield 10. It lasted 10 days, and a day was spent at anchor in Pulau Tioman. It was a great opportunity for our junior ACO's and OCO's to find out what it is like working with the Australians, Singaporeans, Malaysians, and Brits and to gain an appreciation of what it may be like "at war" with aircrafts flying low, 5 inch and 50 cal's going off everywhere, lack of sleep and actions stations galore. All of our training was put to good use and tried, with both the Bridge and COMCEN taking major hits and a big thank you to MOET FCS and FYS for your advice and guidance to helping our Comms Team iron out those train tracks and run a little smoother.

A few days passage to Hong Kong and Shanghai were the only times we were not in company, detaching from Endeavour who took the pleasure of Korean hospitality instead. So the Comms Team had a little break from Defence Watches. 3 days in Hong Kong. Amazing! It was the first time



there for most of us. Some made it to Disney Land and The Big Buddha. Others enjoyed the shopping and night life. What ever you did it Hong Kong it was bound to be fun.

It was a short lived 3 day passage from Hong Kong and “Ni Hao” Shanghai. Markets. Haggle your little heart out and get some Christmas shopping done. For anyone that goes to China, The Great Wall tour is a must. \$USD750 and worth every cent. It may have been the highlight of this trip.



Beijing. 5 star hotel, all admissions, meals, and our dedicated tour guide for 3 days, the lovely and patient Nancy who was full of history and information. Their culture and history is so rich with all their food, dances and materials. And just when you think you have it hard, remember 90% of the children of China go to school 6 days a week starting 8am with their home work and extra curricular activities taking them right up until 10pm each night. They don't know what fun is. Everyday was jam-packed with places to see, food to taste, and things to learn about. Each meal was at a different restaurant, where we tasted 7-10 authentic Chinese cuisines. The major sights of Beijing that were part of the admissions included Tian 'amen square (the largest square in the world, easily holding up to 500, 000 people), the Forbidden City just across the highway (where the Emperor lived), Summer Palace (where the Emperor lived during spring and summer), Temple of Heaven, and of course the Great Wall of China that we accessed through the Badaling gate. In between all the delicious meals and

major attractions we took part in a Tea Ceremony, viewed an Acrobatics Show, walked through the Birds Nest that the held the 2008 Olympics, and toured while being educated on factories that made Silk, Fresh Water Pearls and those intricate colourful copper Vases.



We left Shanghai for our 17 day passage to Esquimalt Canada meeting up with HMAS New Castle and HMNZS Endeavour around the Japanese Straits. During this leg we were able to get a lot of serials and visual training in, including a Flag Hoist Competition. Trucking along we picked up USS John McCain and Japanese Ships Chikuma and Jintsu for a day conducting Exercise Goodwill. We crossed the International Date Line half way through our passage on the 2nd of June, which seen LCO Reedy celebrate two birthdays, two days in a row. Ever seen how dangerous and life threatening the ocean is in The Worlds Deadliest Catch? The Bering Sea for us was a stark contrast having the most tranquil glacial waters and the best views of Artic wild life. New Castle had to detach for a medivac to Dutch Harbour, Aleutian Islands which we sailed right by a few days later and the snowy volcanic tips of Alaska were the first signs of American soil we laid eyes on. Nearing Canada, we met up with another Japanese Ship Akebone for the day that was also on its way to the Canadian Centennial

International Fleet Review. Parts of ship worked hard rust busting and upper deck husbandry getting the ship up to a very high standard for the IFR.

Hello Canada. Everyone is so friendly and helpful, very similar to NZ. We were all very proud to be represent little New Zealand amidst 14 different countries ALL the way in



Canada, 20 ships in total at anchor in Esquimalt Harbour for the IFR. Esquimalt displayed an impressive set of fire works for the ships while at anchor, held a Rock Concert and Sports Day for the Navies. It was also where our beloved Archi was flown home, too eager to get to HQ1 during an exercise and forgot the golden rule about climbing down hatches.

Half a days passage and we arrived in Vancouver. All our passages between the Canadian and American ports were only a few hours. We were berthed on the North Shore of Vancouver, similar to home again where we had to catch the Sea Bus to get to the main city centre. A few of us made it up Whistler Mountain where the Winter Olympics were held earlier this year.



Seattle was our first American port. Everything to do tourist wise is so spread out. Pike Place Markets and the first ever Star Bucks cafe' were right there. Mt St Helens, the half blown maunga was 3hrs away in one direction and Mt Rainier 2hrs in the other. Did not make it that far, however there was the Olympic Discovery where you drive around this farm in your truck (preferably) and feed buffaloes and bears that walk around freely, and the Air Force and Army Bases which were like cities of their own.

Before we knew it we were in San Francisco and had acquired another communicator, OCO Brown. The Gay Pride celebrations were on and are definitely an eye opener, even for the ones who thought they had seen it all! Our guys had a rugby game first day in. Made it to 6 Flags Theme Park all the way in Vallejo, biked over the Golden Gate Bridge, and did the headphone tour at Alcatraz Prison. First day in San Diego, the ships VLT had us going to Padres vs Astros baseball game.



The Outlet shops, Sea World, and the San Diego Zoo were the main attractions, while others made it to Los Angeles and Las Vegas. Congratulations to ACO Raihania and ACO Hook on their promotion during our passage to Hawaii. This has also been a short but well deserved break for the Comms Crew and their wallets. We detached from Endeavour for a day in between working with USS Preble. Preble were the instigators of the water bomb fight while passing during RASAPS.

It is hard to say which port is my favourite; Hong Kong, Beijing and San Francisco are all in the running, however the forecast tell me that Hawaii is going to be the best of them all, in which we are due to arrive tomorrow. Te Kaha Comms Crew have come a long way from where we were before Bersama Shield and I have every confidence in saying that we have been and continue to do our best at being ambassadors for little New Zealand while making the most of what these incredible countries have to offer. So for now Aloha my Friends and see you soon,
Te Kaha Comms Crew

From the Communications Training School

It has been a relatively busy period for the Communications Training School (CTS) running an ACO Phase Two course and two LCO courses, a total of 15 personnel including 2 MAP students from PNG. Currently CTS is updating the POYS course before commencement in September.

As with other units CTS has its own manning deficiencies; CTO currently posted to MOET and the CTSM is away holidaying in the Solomon Islands. CTO divisional responsibilities are being covered by LT Taua and WO Gee for everything else. The CTS is also deficient 2 X POYS instructors (names of volunteers for these posts to CPOCSS Moa).

The Fleet Work Trainer has been well used over the last three months by the LCO courses, utilising the facility for their general bridge/warfare training, culminating in their COPE assessments. Readers are reminded that it is available for any unit to use for Communications and OOW training with the bookings run on strict schedules through the CTSSI.

The CTS Commcen is still waiting for cabling issues to be rectified before set to work is carried out. ESDUR unknown, as we are still awaiting contractor assistance!

The CTS Signal Training Facility which is available for flag hoist and flashing light activities for those of the visual affiliation, has been well used by outside units over the last few months. Bookings to use the facility are to be made through the CTSSI.

NZBR33 has been extensively reviewed by CTSSI. The latest version will be reviewed and published on the Intranet. Watch this space for further details.

The CTS main business is of course teaching and we have managed to put through 15 students for this quarter. This is not including other small courses such as MROC, UCC, CBO, CCO etc. For those of you that have recently completed courses, the journey doesn't stop when you have finished; it is merely another step along the path of knowledge so take the opportunity as it presents itself to consolidate your training and also to pass it onto those around you.

Where possible, senior courses are programmed to align with LRCP and POCP courses. For those interested, now is the time to start consolidating your practical skills and knowledge; and working on those fitness levels where required. It is worth it in the end!

There will be a lot of changes on the horizon; both for us as an organisation and personally. The only way to tackle change is together as a branch and individually through our own conduct and actions.

Finally thank you to all for the loan of voice operators for the LCO courses, your assistance has proved invaluable.

Input from the Fleet Communications Specialist

Obviously a very busy period for all and it has been noticed here as well at MOET. Over the past three months I have had a lot of exposure to the fleet and notably for the month of August, MOET has undertaken assessments onboard RES and HAW. But doesn't stop there; coming up soon there will be a lot of visits to OTA, MAN and WGN.

Main points to note from my observations onboard so far:

1. Communications Mentoring – you should all know who your respective mentors are; don't be shy about contacting them or the FCS if you have any issues arising. Remember there is no such thing as a dumb question; it is only a subject you don't have all the information on just yet !
2. Communications Plans – there is a reason we make up Complans so ensure you use them; and make certain your staff understand them and can extrapolate the relevant information. Plan ahead and activate them (plus the equipment) at least one day prior to sailing. I am seeing too many units shooting from the hip when it comes to sailing – and you are not salty enough to do that!
3. Securing for Sea – remember if it can move, it has the potential to fly across the room to and collide with other objects – humans included. Maybe we have to go back to old school and start dumping all unsecured objects on the deck.
4. Communications Security – supervisors need to become more conversant with Emergency Destruction and ensure staff are familiar with unit “kill cards”
5. MONICAR – more attention to be paid to this by some units; the M hunt has started and units will be contacted IDC if targets are not met.
6. Tactical on VHF 72 is prohibited unless equipment limitations necessitate its use.

It is good to see units are approaching FCS prior to inspections to ensure they are squared away prior to the day – well done.

Great work being done on the training of juniors as well; good to see the results coming through. To those doing the hard yards learning – well done to you all as well. Keep the effort up and remember the day you stop learning, is the day you start to slow down !

Also awesome to note that for the month of August, the Communications trade had the highest percentage of personnel FFOS within the Operations branch; Comms being at 62.3% FFOS, the Operations branch average being at 60% and the Divers at 48% - KEEP IT UP !

Wanted

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Articles for new special section in which readers can contribute articles/photos on their own experiences and trips in the civvy sector.

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Adverts

Communications Association AGM

26Sep10 at Birkenhead RSA (for further details contact:
WOYS Dyke, WOYS Carroll or Cdr Rands or go to www.rzncomms.org

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